

Dear Co-Chairs Cohen and Gresko, Vice-Chairs Slap and Palm, Ranking Members Miner and Harding, and members of the Environment Committee,

I write to ask you to support Raised House Bill 5291, An Act Authorizing Bonding for Bikeways, Greenways, and Recreational Trails.

This important bill would increase the bond authorization for the Recreational Trails and Greenways Grants program to \$6 million. In Fall 2021 DEEP issued a request for recreational trails proposals with only \$3 million available. It received 65 applications requesting over \$22 million, of which the highly ranked proposals alone totaled over \$7 million. Although \$3 million was granted to twenty worthy projects, we expect the ongoing need for investments in Connecticut's outdoor recreation infrastructure to continue.

Seven years ago I was fortunate to be hired by Cycling Sports Group in Wilton, CT. Cycling Sports Group owns Cannondale, a high end bike brand which was founded at the Cannondale train station in Wilton, CT. My employment at CSG has opened a world of cycling for my family. My family spends many hours each week riding bikes and we are always looking for safe areas to ride off roads and away from cars. I fully support expanding funding for additional trails in Connecticut.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this matter.

Sincerely,

Sarah Schlechter, 5 Woods End Lane, Weston, CT
Senior Manager Master Data, Cycling Sports Group, Wilton, CT